



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL
OFFICE OF STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATION



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**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2006 MEETING OF
THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

Chairman Carozza called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioners Nicol, Ouellette, Stankye and Walsh.

Staff members Lewis, Morrissette, Auclair and Piskura were present.

Attendees took a moment to pledge allegiance to the American flag.

Guests to the meeting were identified as members of the Crombie family, Linda Kleinschmidt, Ted Schroll, Legislative Representative of the Connecticut State Firefighters Association and Bill Auclair, Program Manager for the Connecticut Fire Academy.

The meeting proceeded on an informational basis due to lack of a quorum.

Chairman Carozza stated if there was no objection he would like to take the opportunity to welcome and recognize past Commission Chairman Philip E. Crombie to the meeting. The Commission has taken the initiative to recognize past Chairman of the Commission. Today we recognize Philip E. Crombie, South Windsor Fire Department who was appointed to the Commission by Governor Ella Grasso on November 6, 1975 representing the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association. He was elected Commission Chairman on December 30, 1975 and served as Chairman through October 30, 1979. He completed his service to the Commission in 1987. Chairman Carozza said it is an honor today and on behalf of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control and the staff at the Connecticut Fire Academy we thank him for his leadership in making this all possible. He called on State Fire Administrator Jeff Morrissette for remarks before the unveiling of a portrait of Mr. Crombie.

State Fire Administrator Morrissette remarked that he would like to introduce for those Commissioners who do not know him Mr. Crombie's son, Phil Crombie, Jr. and asked him to introduce the remainder of the family present today.

Mr. Crombie, Jr. introduced his mother Faye, his sister Kathy and his aunt Carol.

Mr. Morrissette thanked former Chairman Crombie for all of his efforts. He said in his position as State Fire Administrator he often has the opportunity to go back into the history of the Commission and review the early meeting minutes of this body to elicit the history and foundation for a lot of the decisions and policy that was made. Without a

doubt, the foundation for much of what we do today was set back then. He thanked former Chairman Crombie for his leadership and service to Connecticut's fire service. He said the artwork was commissioned and the artist was Paul Walsh of the New Britain Fire Department. Unfortunately, Mr. Walsh is working today and could not be with us for the unveiling.

Former Commission Chairman Crombie remarked that besides being on the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control he was involved with the early planning for the Commission and convened the first meeting. He said he never would have imagined the Commission would end up in a facility such as this and the State Fire Administrator has done a tremendous job. He thanked the Commission and said he was very honored.

Mr. Morrisette remarked that as most are aware we sustained a medical emergency here at the Fire Academy a few weeks ago, a heart attack sustained by Ed O'Hurley. While we are planning an event hopefully to be at the State Capitol for a later date yet to be scheduled he said he wanted to have an informal recognition of Bill Auclair. He said he felt it was important to at least bring to the Commission's attention the monumental efforts of Mr. Auclair as well as some other staff people who assisted him. Mr. Auclair is recognized for his professionalism and his immediate response, practicing what he preaches as he is responsible for the emergency medical care programs that we deliver here at the Academy. It is through Mr. Auclair's efforts that we have an employee who will be back to work in about four to six weeks. Mr. Morrisette said without his efforts he doesn't think the outcome would be same and we're thankful to Mr. Auclair for all of his efforts.

Chairman Carozza thanked Mr. Auclair for responding to the emergency and for all of his efforts on behalf of the Commission.

Mr. Auclair remarked that the Academy was proactive in placing the defibrillators where they need to be and this was definitely a case of right time and right place. He said it was a classic case and everything fell into place.

Chairman Carozza said even though we don't have a quorum we would go through the agenda for any questions Commissioners may have.

Moving to item 2) Approval of the June 27, 2006 meeting minutes.

Commissioner Ouellette asked a question about the June minutes regarding the Recruit training program cost. It was mentioned that the increase in the cost of the Recruit program for the expansion was approximately \$2,000 but then Commissioner Brady asked about the cost structure and it was stated that is currently around \$3,000. He wanted to know if that was an error.

Mr. Morrisette replied that Commissioner Brady was mentioning the current cost structure of \$3,000 and the \$2,000 was in addition to that for the four week Recruit program expansion. He asked Mr. Piskura, Director of Training to remark.

Mr. Piskura stated that the total cost for the Recruit program expansion comes to just under \$5,000.

Moving to item 3) Staff Reports June 15, 2006 – July 14, 2006, July 15, 2006 – August 14, 2006 and August 15, 2006 – September 14, 2006.

Commissioner Stankye asked a question on the staff report for the period of August 15, 2006 – September 14, 2006 Administration report item 1c. He asked what is going to be involved as far as security here.

Mr. Morrisette replied that in 2001 the Department of Public Works (DPW) conducted a facility survey and a plan was developed to address some of the deficiencies that were noted by the consultant. He said his concern at the time was most of the issues identified were not proactive security measures but rather reactive for example cameras, panic buttons, etc. He said the plan they came up with to address the deficiencies was estimated to be around \$250,000. At the present time we are number six on DPW's priority funding list as we are deemed a lower security risk facility.

Commissioner Stankye also asked about Administration report item 6, letters mailed to fire companies on the FY07 Supplemental Grant program. He asked if whether this is the Limited Access Highway program.

Mr. Morrisette remarked that the language is interchangeable and funding is now through the appropriation. By Statute it is called the Supplemental Grant Program and there is really no Limited Access Highway program remaining. He said as Commissioners are aware, there is \$200,000 available in the current year which gives each eligible fire company \$1,150 as a direct payment or voucher and letters were mailed to those companies.

Commissioner Stankye also said he would like to compliment someone that progress is finally being made with DPW and Department of Transportation (DOT) for the Hartford County School land agreement issue here at the CFA.

Mr. Morrisette asked for the Commission's indulgence to move to New Business item 5d National Public Safety Education Complex. He said some Commissioners may recall Linda Kleinschmidt came before the Commission about two years ago to present her vision for this initiative. She would like to provide an update to the Commission today.

Ms. Kleinschmidt introduced Bill Mallick her business associate for the National Public Safety Education Complex. She stated that this is a project she has been working on for approximately three years and is basically going to be an educational facility for children, parents and all of the public safety communities; training for fire, police and EMS and includes federal, state and municipal entities all in one. The main building will be over 375,000 square feet and will have eight seminar rooms stadium style, two conference rooms over 150 seats per room. Each agency would have a display area of about 900

square feet and will include any and everything having to do with public safety. There will also be an Emergency Vehicle Operations Center (EVOC) and indoor firing range. All of the federal agencies are being offered small satellite offices within their display areas. She said one of the reasons one might not hear anything about the project is that they're trying to keep it as quiet as possible for as long as possible. A few things have happened since she last came before the Commission. They have found a location and have been dealing with a developer since March of this past year and conducted a walk thru last Monday of a site that is about 50 acres. Ms. Kleinschmidt also stated that initially they had planned to be a non-profit organization but at this time they are not able to be a non-profit with this venture and the reason is if they accept funding from any federal or state agency specifically, they would have to then favor that particular agency. She also said they have found funding for the project as well as a developer that they are currently in negotiations with. If they break ground this year they would get the EVOC track done by next fall and everything should be fully operational by 2008. Ms. Kleinschmidt said as they move forward they have their funding sources. One of the things they've been asked to do is to back up that the facility will be used and to have letters of interest from different agencies including the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control. The projected cost for the project is anywhere from \$110 to \$130 million dollars and they expect that it will be cash flow positive by the end of year 2008 assuming they break ground this year.

Chairman Carozza asked if the National Public Safety Education Complex is geared towards Connecticut.

Ms. Kleinschmidt replied no it is national and is going to be the first of its kind in the country and the world but they do have future sites, at least three or four other locations across the country.

Chairman Carozza asked why they decided on Connecticut.

Ms. Kleinschmidt replied that she lives in Connecticut and also works for Police on Patrol and had a radio show for seven and half years and still has a cable program which is now Public Safety on Patrol because they include fire safety etc. She said while she was out there in past years she noticed a lot of things that were needed for training and from that she got her idea and began talking to different people and agencies.

Chairman Carozza asked for a Mission Statement.

Ms. Kleinschmidt said they are revising their business plan and provided the statement.

Chairman Carozza asked if members of the Commissioner had any questions.

There was a brief question and answer period.

Chairman Carozza thanked Ms. Kleinschmidt and Mr. Mallick for attending the meeting and enlightening the Commission.

Moving to item 4a.) Budget/Staffing Update –Mr. Morrisette reported regarding the budget. We have executed with the assistance of the DAS SMART unit Business office our Biennium Budget submittal. This was just the operational side of the budget; expansion items and some of the capital items will follow in the next month or two. We are dictated as to what we can request for most of the operational side of the budget like inflationary increases and the like. One of the areas which is still not complete is the area that reflects the budget for the Regional Fire Schools. He said he had solicited some input from the schools as to how they wanted him to address their particular needs and whether they wanted him to submit an inflationary fudge factor for example a three percent increase across the board for each of the schools or whether each school want to submit individual budgets with justifications. At their last meeting they agreed that they would independently work to submit budgets for each of the school with a justification. He said he contacted Secretary Genuario from Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and attempted to schedule a meeting with them particularly to discuss that area but the meeting has not been scheduled as of yet. He also said he requested some nominal increases in a few areas where we have initiated some new programs over the past year or so. Mr. Morrisette gave a staffing update. He said as Commissioners are aware, we had a termination of an employee a few months ago and we're moving to try to fill that vacancy. There is currently one certified Fire Service Instructor that remains on a certified Trainers list and we hope within the next month or so we'll have an opportunity to talk with that individual. As with any significant termination, there is an appeals process and we are working through that. He also said some Commissioners are aware but he regrets to announce that Fred Piechota has submitted his letter of intent to retire from the Commission as early as November 1st. He's had an opportunity through the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualification to assume the position of Accreditation Manager which became vacant upon the illness of their long time Manager Ken Elmore, former fire chief of Palm Beach, Florida. He said Mr. Piechota thanks the Commission for their support and the opportunity to serve. We've notified DAS of the anticipated vacancy and have already begun the process to announce an examination for the position which is classified as Fire Service Analyst.

Commissioner Nicol asked for a moment of silence in light of the death of former State Fire Administrator, William Porter.

Moving to item 4b.) CSFA Education Committee Update – Commissioner Nicol reported that the last meeting of the Education Committee was held on August 24th and DPW reported that the Rogers site will be purchased for the Willimantic School at a price of \$1.55 million. The lease agreement is in progress for the Hartford County School and once the lease is signed, site design will begin. The lease for the Burville School is still in progress. The Oxford appraisal for the future Valley School site is being ordered. A pre-design meeting will be held for the New Haven Fire School. A discussion was held regarding next phase of funding for Regional Schools. Project Manager Don Ouillette indicated that after considerable discussion between OPM and DPW, the Governor's proposed capital budget will include \$15 million for next year and then \$15 million for the second year which is the FY 08 budget. There was considerable discussion about the

Regional Fire School's budget for next year and the next meeting will be held September 28th.

Mr. Morrisette also reported that we signed the agreement for 1.6 acres of land at Bradley with DOT. He has not received the executed document back from DPW and he assumes DPW Commissioner Fleming has also signed the agreement. This would allow DPW to begin some of the initial engineering studies.

Moving to item 4c.) Service Voucher Update – Mr. Morrisette reported regarding the Limited Access Highway (LAH) Supplemental Grant Award Program. He said the number of eligible fire companies went down again this year because a department may notify us stating that XYZ fire company is no longer in business that they've either consolidated it or they are no longer recognized as an independent fire company. Letters were mailed to 161 eligible companies with each to receive \$1,150. Thus far, 57 fire companies responded to our initial letter requesting for them to decide how they want the Commission to administer their funds with 31 requesting vouchers and 26 requesting direct payment. Also, approximately 12 companies have carried funds over from last fiscal year but that will not be the case this year as all funds must be spent in the current fiscal year or they will lose the funding. He asked for the Commission's assistance in conveying this information to ensure companies move quickly to use the funds. One problem in the current fiscal year that we've encountered is the way the \$200,000 appropriation was made to the agency to support this grant. \$100,000 was placed into a separate account for the Supplemental Grant Program and the other \$100,000 was placed into the agency's Other Expense Account. There is a Fiscal Advisory Committee meeting scheduled next week which we'll ask for formal transfer of the funding to the appropriate account. That also caused some budget issues because the budget document we're working on for the next Biennium is built on the current year allotments so there will have to be some adjustment to that. He said he doesn't anticipate any problems and he'll be available if testimony is required.

Moving to item 4d.) New London County IMT Recognition –Chairman Carozza stated that we still have not heard from Chief DeLia therefore we will continue to table this item.

Moving to item 4e.) Minor Firefighter Issue – Mr. Morrisette said Commissioners Kowalski and Brady were both involved in meetings with the Department of Labor (DOL) concerning minor firefighters. As Commissioners may recall, the accident that occurred in New Hartford caused a stir within the DOL and they were looking to potentially cite the department for having minors on the apparatus. We did initiate some meetings with DOL and Commissioners Kowalski and Brady took a lead in the meetings. As of last week, they have a general agreement in terms of the future direction. There will still be some prohibited activities of minors and it's not significantly different from what the DOL had but the problem is DOL didn't share the information readily or clearly with those that they are regulating. The next phase is to clean up the document. He gave a draft to Director of Training Piskura as this was his initial role to meet with DOL to clean up the wording. DOL will take that information and publish a brochure and then

schedule regional meetings with interested fire departments that have some concerns over the issue. We will assist them in those meetings. He said he knows some of the staff have concerns over the negotiated activities but our primary issue is our Introduction to the Fire Service training program.

Commissioner Nicol asked if the brochure will be provided by the DOL or will the Commission assist in developing it.

Mr. Morrissette replied that it is his understanding that it would be a publication of the DOL because they are the regulatory agency and the ultimate enforcer but we agreed to assist them in setting up meetings and working with them jointly to ensure that the information is disseminated as widely as possible.

There was a brief discussion on the issue and whether minors should be allowed on the fire ground. Chairman Carozza requested a full report at the next meeting.

Moving to item 5a.) Election of Officers –Chairman Carozza tabled this item for the next meeting due to lack of a quorum.

Mr. Morrissette reminded Commissioners that the next Commission meeting will be hosted by the USAR Team at Brainard Airfield in Hartford on October 31st at 9:30 am.

Moving to item 5b.) Annual Report FY 2005/2006 – Mr. Morrissette stated that we had previously transmitted to Commissioners the annual report and asked if there were any questions. He said we saw significant increases in the number of classes delivered and student attendance which was driven by the partnership with Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) and the NIMS ICS related training. We've had a very busy year and things haven't slowed down at all up to this point.

Moving to item 5c.) 2007 Legislative Session- Legislative Initiatives – Mr. Morrissette said he just wanted to put this out in terms of the 2007 Legislative Session to see if there are any items that may be of interest specific to the Commission. One of the areas that we may have and Commissioner Brady had contacted him this past week is the Fire Safe Cigarette legislation. He said there is an attempt nationally to propose some model legislation driven by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and a coalition that they've established. He said he had contacted Commissioner Blashchik to check to see whether Public Safety will be proposing this. Commissioner Blashchik indicated that he felt the Fire Marshals' Association and some of the County groups would be pushing that particular issue.

Commissioner Nicol asked about the status of legislation regarding funding for training.

Mr. Morrissette said that never really went anywhere last session and died after the public hearing. He said last year we had asked the Public Safety Committee to sponsor it which they did so we did not have to submit through OPM. He said he anticipates we could do

the same this year and with the Regional Schools coming on line it will have to be addressed.

A brief discussion on funding for training followed.

Moving to item 6- Comments from the public - There was none.

Moving to item 7 – Matters to be raised by Commissioners and staff –Chairman Carozza read a thank you card that was received from Ed O’Hurley. Chairman Carozza stated that he wanted to recognize the staff again for an outstanding job.

Commissioner Nicol reported that he plans to attend the Mid-Atlantic Association of State Fire Commissions conference scheduled for October 19-21 in Mount Laurel, NJ and asked if any member had ideas or questions they would like addressed. He said it’s a good opportunity to obtain input from the ten states that are involved.

Mr. Morrisette stated there will be a public safety program on Abandoned and Vacant Properties at Central Connecticut State University on October 25th. He said our role will be minimal and we’ll be working with Chief Ruggiero of Windsor Locks and the Statewide Fire Plan to remind fire chiefs and others that there is a state plan and some of the pre-planning efforts should not only deal with the structures itself but should also include pre-planning for the response. He said it’s a free program if Commissioners are interested in attending.

Mr. Morrisette also reported that the DEMHS has a number of working Committees and one of them is the Interoperability Committee of which the fire service has a vacancy. He said if any member has an interest to serve representing the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control to let him know as he needs to submit a name very soon. If there is no interest by Commissioners we will look to have a staff person participate.

Executive Secretary Yvonne Lewis extended an invitation to Commissioners to attend the Connecticut State Firefighters fourth annual Memorial Service scheduled for October 15th at the Fire Academy. Mr. Morrisette added that the Governor is expected to attend and he would be embarrassed if we had a smaller group than last year. He asked members to get the word out to the fire service organizations.

Mr. Morrisette also reported that there is a public hearing scheduled for tomorrow by the Freedom of Information Commission (FOI) which impacts specific statutes relating to the disclosure of residential addresses of a number of occupations including firefighters. He said he was contacted by the office of the Commissioner of Public Safety who had some serious concerns and wanted the word to get out to the fire service if we share that concern to feel free to show up and testify at the hearing.

Mr. Piskura reported that we received word from the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) that the rules of engagement pertaining to CPAT are going to change. We’re not going to do anything until next year so we’ll continue forth the way we are.

The significant changes are that for the first time we are going to report statistics to the IAFF and it's going to change the way a candidate can be tested and actually give them three shots at the test and that causes some concern so we'll take the winter months to decide how we're going to do this and still cover our cost. He said currently we don't charge for every orientation and we don't need a complete set of proctors. Now an orientation becomes an actual test so he has to have the same number of proctors as he does for the real test.

He also stated they were having problems with Fit Testing Machines. As Commissioners know, we provide fit testing services and our cadre of fit testers have become the subject matter experts to the law enforcement community; state police and municipal police. All three disciplines are experiencing numerous issues with a particular manufacturer where the device is not performing as advertised and in comparison to the device we currently own in that it takes longer to test a person.

Chairman Carozza adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

Dated:

James P. Wilkinson, Secretary
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control